

**DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE
AND REQUEST FOR COMMENT OF SCOPE OF EIS**
(WAC 197-11-980)

Description of the proposal: The proposal consists of local development and adoption of watershed plans under provisions of the Watershed Planning Act, Chapter 90.82 RCW. That act establishes a comprehensive and cooperative method for assessment of the current status of water resources in the various watersheds within the state, and for local development of watershed plans for management of such resources. Chapter 90.82 RCW has created a framework for addressing the state's water resource and water quality issues, establishing instream flows, and addressing salmon habitat needs.

All watershed plans prepared under Chapter 90.82 RCW must contain a water quantity component and may, at the discretion of the initiating governments for a Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) or multi-WRIA planning area, contain instream flow, water quality, and habitat components. The planning process defined in Chapter 90.82 RCW involves three phases: 1) organization, during which the planning unit is formed and the scope of watershed planning is developed; 2) technical assessment; and 3) plan development and approval. Membership of the planning unit for a WRIA or multi-WRIA planning area includes representation of a wide range of water resources interests.

Once a plan has been developed and accepted by a planning unit, it must then be approved by the jurisdictional county legislative authority or authorities. After approval a plan by the jurisdictional county legislative authority or authorities, state and local entities that were party to the plan and its recommended actions become obligated to implement the recommended actions.

Proponent: Washington Department of Ecology

Location of proposal: The nonproject action applies statewide to all WRIsAs within the state in which watershed planning under provisions of Chapter 90.82 RCW is currently in progress or may occur in the future. Currently, 41 of the state's 62 WRIsAs are in the process of organizing, conducting technical assessments, or planning under Chapter 90.82 RCW, including eight multi-WRIA planning efforts. Initiating governments for two additional WRIsAs have indicated intent to plan, but are still completing applications. A map identifying the location of the state's WRIsAs is attached. Table 1 identifies the WRIsAs in which watershed planning under Chapter 90.82 RCW is occurring, the status of such planning, and the completion date for each plan.

Lead Agency: Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program, Washington Department of Ecology

EIS Required. The lead agency has determined that this proposal is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is required under 43.21C.030 (2) (c) and will be prepared. A Nonproject Review Form

has been prepared in lieu of an environmental checklist and is available upon request from the Department of Ecology contact person listed below.

The lead agency has identified the following areas for discussion in the EIS for each of the four watershed plan components:

Water Quantity Component

- Impacts to public services and utilities associated with implementation of municipal conservation programs.
- Short-term impacts to earth, air, and environmental health from construction activities associated with agricultural water conservation and irrigation efficiency efforts.
- Long-term impacts to microclimates, ground water recharge, surface water temperature, plants and animals, and land and shoreline use associated with agricultural water conservation and irrigation efficiency efforts.
- Impacts to publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities associated with industrial conservation measures.
- Long-term impacts to land use, aesthetics, and ground water recharge associated with voluntary transfers of water and changes in water use.
- Short-term impacts to earth, air, surface water, plants and animals, environmental health, and traffic associated with construction of water reclamation and reuse facilities.
- Impacts to ground and surface water quality and quantity, land and shoreline use, and public health associated with operation of water reclamation and reuse facilities.
- Short-term impacts to earth, air, surface water, plants and animals, environmental health, and traffic associated with construction of new on-channel or off-channel storage facilities, raising of existing storage facilities, or implementing artificial recharge/aquifer storage projects.
- Seismic effects and impacts to stream ecology, wildlife habitat, land and shoreline use, and energy associated with operation of new on-channel or off-channel storage facilities, or raised existing storage facilities.
- Short-term and long-term impacts to surface water quality, recreation, aesthetics, and public services and utilities associated with installation, operation, and maintenance of water quantity monitoring devices.

Instream Flows Component

- Long-term impacts to surface water, ground water, land and shoreline use, aesthetics, recreation, and cultural resources associated with setting of instream flows and with implementation of actions intended to achieve instream flows once set.

Water Quality Component

- Short-term and long-term impacts to surface water quality, recreation, and public services and utilities associated with development and operation of monitoring programs, including installation and maintenance of monitoring devices.
- Long-term impacts to land and shoreline use associated with modifications to comprehensive plans, shoreline master programs, critical areas ordinances, stormwater plans, and on-site sewage regulations intended to reduce non-point pollution and to implement total mass daily loads established for federal 303 d listed water bodies.

Habitat Component

- Short-term construction related impacts to earth, air, surface water, plants and animals, environmental health, and traffic associated with placement of instream structures, riparian restoration projects, and removal of fish passage obstructions.
- Long-term Impacts to recreation and aesthetics associated with placement of instream structures and riparian restoration projects.
- Long-term impacts to traffic and public services and utilities associated with removal of fish passage obstructions such as bridges, culverts, and roadways.

***Scoping.* Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of the EIS. You may comment on alternatives, mitigation measures, probable significant adverse impacts, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. The method and deadline for giving us your comments is:**

Comments may be submitted in writing to:

Derek Sandison
Department of Ecology
15 W. Yakima Ave., Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98902

Or emailed to:

dsan461@ecy.wa.gov

The deadline for comments is March 4, 2002.

Responsible official: Gordon White

Title: Manager, Department of Ecology, Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program

Contact Person: Derek Sandison

Phone: (509) 574-3992

Address: Department of Ecology
15 W. Yakima Avenue, Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98902

Date: January 29, 2002

Signature: _____

TABLE 1
WATERSHED PLANNING STATUS/SCHEDULE

WRIA	PLANNING PHASE	PLANNED COMPLETION DATE	PLANNING ELEMENTS (as of 12/31/01)			
			Water Quantity	Instream Flows	Water Quality	Habitat
#1 – Nooksack	2 & 3	Fall 2003	X	X	X	X
#2 – San Juan	2 & 3	Fall 2003	X		X	X
#3 – Lower Skagit/ #4 – Upper Skagit	2 & 3	Fall 2003	X	X		
#5 – Stilliguamish	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#6 – Island	2	Spring 2005	X			
#7 – Snohomish	Startup	To be determined	X			
#8 – Cedar – Sammamish	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#9 – Duwamish – Green	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#10 Puyallup	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#11 – Nisqually	2	Fall 2003	X	X	X	X
#12 – Chambers – Clover	2 & 3	Fall 2004	X		X	X
#13 – Deschutes	2 & 3	Fall 2004	X	X	X	X
#14 – Kennedy – Goldsborough	2 & 3	Fall 2005	X	X	X	X
#15 – Kitsap	2	Spring 2005	X	X	X	X
#16 – Skokomish – Dosewallips	2 & 3	Fall 2005	X	X	X	X
#17 – Quilcene – Snow	2 & 3	Winter 2004	X	X	X	X
#18 – Elwha – Dungeness	2 & 3	Fall 2003	X	X	X	X
#19 – Lyre – Hoko/ #20 – Solduck	2	Summer 2005	X	X	X	X
#21 – Queets – Quinault	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#22 – Lower Chehalis/ #23 – Upper Chehalis	2 & 3	Winter 2003	X	X	X	X

TABLE 1
WATERSHED PLANNING STATUS/SCHEDULE

WATER RESOURCE INVENTORY AREA	PLANNING PHASE	PLANNED COMPLETION DATE	PLANNING ELEMENTS (as of 12/31/01)			
			Water Quantity	Instream Flows	Water Quality	Habitat
#24 – Willipa	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#25 – Grays – Elochoman/ #26 – Cowlitz	2 & 3	Summer 2004	X	X	X	X
#27 – Lewis/ #28 – Salmon – Washougal	2 & 3	Summer 2004	X	X	X	X
#29 – Wind – White Salmon	2	Spring 2005	X	X	X	X
#30 – Klickitat	1	To be determined	X		X	X
#31 – Rock – Glade	Startup	To be determined	X			
#32 – Walla Walla	2 & 3	Summer 2005	X	X	X	X
#33 – Lower Snake	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#34 – Palouse	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#35 – Middle Snake	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#36 – Esquatzel Coulee	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#37 – Lower Yakima/ #38 – Naches/ #39 – Upper Yakima	3	Fall 2003	X	X (no flows for WRIA 38)	X	X
#40 – Alkali – Squilchuck	Application filed but incomplete					
#41 – Lower Crab Creek	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#42 – Grand Coulee	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#43 – Upper Crab Creek	1	To be determined	X	X		
#44 – Moses Coulee/ #50 – Foster Creek	2	Fall 2004	X	X	X	X
#45 – Wenatchee	2	Summer 2005	X	X	X	X
#46 – Entiat	2	Fall 2003	X	X	X	X

TABLE 1
WATERSHED PLANNING STATUS/SCHEDULE

WATER RESOURCE INVENTORY AREA	PLANNING PHASE	PLANNED COMPLETION DATE	PLANNING ELEMENTS (as of 10/20/01)			
			Water Quantity	Instream Flow	Water Quality	Habitat
#47 – Chelan	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#48 – Methow	2	Fall 2003	X		X	X
#49 – Okanogan	Application filed, but incomplete					
#51 – Nespelum	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#52 – Sanpoil	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#53 – Lower Lake Roosevelt	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#54 – Lower Spokane	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#55 – Little Spokane/ #57 – Middle Spokane	2	Winter 2004	X	X	X	
#56 – Hangman	2	Fall 2004	X	X	X	X
#58 – Middle Lake Roosevelt	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#59 – Colville	2 & 3	Fall 2004	X		X	X
#60 – Kettle	Startup	To be determined	X	X		
#61 – Upper Lake Roosevelt	Currently no Chapter 90.82 RCW planning					
#62 – Pend Oreille	2 & 3	Fall 2004	X		X	X

(WRIA MAP)